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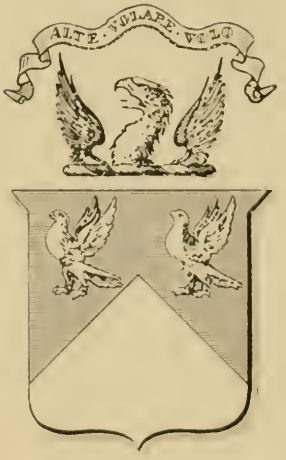

H. Morse Stephens

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Mayburgh

AND

King Arthur's Round Table.

By C. W. DYMOND, F.S.A.

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HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

ART. XVI.—*Mayburgh and King Arthur's Round Table.* By C. W. DYMOND, F.S.A.

THE accompanying plans and sections of these ancient remains are reduced photo-lithographed copies of originals drawn to one scale from exact instrumental surveys made in October, 1889. The objects thus delineated, though not the only relics of remote ages in their district, are by far the most prominent among them. Both are on the south side of the river Eamont, close to the village of Eamont* Bridge, and near together;—their centres being but 445 yards† apart.

Southward from the Round Table, centrally distant from it about 225 yards, and with little more than the width of a road between it and the river Lowther, there formerly existed a slight annular embankment, known as the "Little Round Table," vestiges of which were visible until about the year 1878, when, according to Mr. William Atkinson, the last traces were obliterated in widening the approaches to the new lodge-gates of Lowther park. He describes what he saw as consisting of "a low circular ridge . . . not more than 6 to 9 inches above the level of the surrounding ground, and from 3 to 5 feet broad at the base."‡ There is some difference of statement between authorities who give the diameter of this ring. Stukeley, partial to round numbers, calls it 100 yards, and says, "the *vallum* is small, and the ditch whence it was taken is outermost."§ Hutchinson, who wrongly locates it "nearer to Emont Bridge," (Lowther

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* Locally pronounced "Yammon:" whence, perhaps, Yeoman's bridge, an old form of the name.

† Measured on the 25-inch ordnance map, which, however, is not always quite trustworthy as to the smaller dimensions and distances.

‡ *Trans. Cumbd. and Westm. Ant. Soc.*, vol. VI, p. 444.

§ *Itinerarium Curiosum*, Cent. II, p. 43.

bridge ?)

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bridge?) describes it as a "circular ditch, with a very low rampart, . . . without any apertures or advances;"* and puts the diameter at 70 paces. It is clearly shown on a well-engraved plan in Pennant's *First Tour in Scotland*, 1769, herewith reproduced in *facsimile* on a rather smaller scale. The outer diameter measures 80 yards, after making a needful adjustment of the slightly erroneous scale attached to the plan. No ditch is shown,—the size is too small for that,—but there appears to have been an entrance, or at least a gap, through the bank, a little east of the north point, not quite in the direction of the Round Table, which is somewhat west of north. Mr. Atkinson does not mention the ditch, which may have disappeared. He estimated the diameter of the ring at from 60 to 80 yards. On a comparison of the *data*, we may probably assume that the latter figure is very near the truth. The authors of *Beauties of England and Wales*, after referring to the Round Table, somewhat obscurely describe this inclosure as follows:—"On the adjoining plain are a larger ring with low ramparts, and some smaller ones, [rings?] at present [1814] scarcely visible."†

A field, until lately fenced off, on the south-east side of Mayburgh, and covering the space between it and the main and occupation roads, for no good reason that I can find, was called "High Round Table." Perhaps a curved escarpment, the western and straighter part of which is shown in the plan of Mayburgh, together with other wavy scorings of the surface, may have conjured up in some imaginative mind the idea of another artificial work like the Round Table. It is hardly likely that the name had any reference to the adjoining Mayburgh, which is self-inclosed.

A large cairn once crowned the high northern bank of the Eamont, nearly opposite to Mayburgh. It was being

* *Excursion to the Lakes*, 1773-1774, p. 91.
† Westmorland vol, p. 111.

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emoved even in Stukeley's time; and, apparently, has ong since utterly disappeared, unfortunately without any ote having been taken of its contents. He describes it as a very fine round *tumulus*, of a large size, and set about vith a circle of stones:" from which simple record he haracteristically jumps to the conclusion that "this in ll probability was the funeral monument of the king that ounded" Mayburgh and the Round Table.* That this airn was cöeval with Mayburgh is, however, not unlikely, f any weight is to be attached to the fact that both were uilt with similar materials: for Hutchinson states that it appears where the turf is broken, to be composed of ebbles; it is surrounded at the foot with a circle of large tones, of irregular forms, sizes, and distances, of the circumference of eighty paces."†

A mile-and-a-half due south from Mayburgh, near the op of a hill of moderate height, are the remains of an ntrenched upland settlement known by the name of Castlesteads;" and, three-quarters of a mile east of his, on the other side of the Lowther, half-a-mile south f the village of Clifton, are two standing-stones, of no reat size or interest,—perhaps the only relics of a once-mportant megalithic work. Stukeley mentions other *umuli* and megalithic groups in the Clifton district;—all f which, probably, have long since disappeared.

As to local ancient roads, I have not had an opportunity f gleaning much information; and therefore touch upon he subject with diffidence and reserve. One known Roman way—High Street—either traversed or skirted the *ocus in quo*. Leading from Ambleside over the highest ntervening mountain-ridges, it passed through Tirril to Yanwath; beyond which there appears to be some differnce of opinion as to its course. In an archæological map

* *Itin. Curios.*, II, 44.
† *Exc. to the Lakes*, 98.

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in *Lapidarium Septentrionale*, 1875, published by the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and embodying the results of the best and most recent research, this part of the road is laid down as taking a north-easterly direction from Yanwath, and terminating at Brougham, a full mile east of Eamont Bridge. There it would unite with one of the great roads—that passing near Appleby and Kirkby Thore, —just south of the point where it crossed the Eamont on the way to Penrith and Carlisle. Although much of High Street on mountain and moor may still be seen, and is accurately laid down in the ordnance maps, its whole course is uniformly dotted in the archæological map as "not surveyed, but in accordance with the best local authorities." It is, therefore, not clear what degree of trust may be placed in those portions of the indicated line which are undefined on the ground; and I am not aware that any part of the ancient road, or a branch of it, has actually been traced between Yanwath and Brougham. If now we turn to the large scale ordnance maps, we get a different testimony. In them, High Street is made to diverge from the present Tirril—Yanwath road one-third of a mile short of the bridge over the railway, and to strike the river a few yards to the west of Yanwath Hall, where there would be a ford or a bridge It may be of some importance, in connexion with the subject of this paper, to settle such points as this: and it is evident we need more information about the history of the local roads, many of which are full of hints of survivals from Roman times. Pennant's plan does not help us; there being no indication thereon of an east and west track. The present road was, I believe, made about a century ago; and, from Stukeley's statement that "one end [of the Round Table —doubtless he means the northern end] is inclosed into a neighbouring pasture," it may be inferred that the line of the Roman way at that part, unless lost beneath the sod, did not coincide with the present one. One thing is sure, that,

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—that, if it came in this direction, it must have passed either to the north or to the south of the escarpment extending from the Round Table about 400 yards southward. Bishop Gibson, in his "Additions" to Camden, (ed. 1695, p. 815) makes the Roman way between Brougham and Penrith, after reaching the former place, lead "directly to Lowther-bridge, and so over *Emot* into Cumberland."

MAYBURGH.

Site and general description.—Mayburgh,* seated on a wide low mound of glacial drift, consists of a rude circular cincture of small stones inclosing a nearly level grassy area, except on the east side, where an entrance interrupts the continuity of the rampart. In the midst—though not quite in the centre of the inclosure—stands a massive monolith, the only remaining member of a group, or groups, which once formed a prominent feature of the whole work.

Dimensions.—The following list will be found to include all the important dimensions. In so far as the reference is to that which can be accurately ascertained, and to the present state of the work, the figures may be taken as trustworthy. It is, however, impossible to say how much the *vallum* may have suffered from dilapidation, or to what extent this may, here and there, have altered its form.—

		Feet.
Height of standing stone above ground . .	(9 ft. 2 ins.)	9·17
Greatest girth of stone	about	18
Seat of stone above intrenched area of Round Table .		30
Seat of stone above surface of water of river Eamont .		35
Seat of stone above ordnance *datum*		430·2
Highest part of inclosure (S.E. point) above ordnance *datum*		433
Greatest height of *vallum* (S. point) above foot of outer slope†		21·1

* Pronounced, and often written, Mayborough.
† And about the same height at east end of southern sweep.

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Greatest

Greatest height of *vallum* (E. end of southern sweep) above foot of inner slope	19·3
Least height of *vallum* (N.W. point) above foot of outer slope	10·4
Least height of *vallum* (N.W. point) above foot of inner slope	7·3
Average height of crest of *vallum* above original surface .	13·8
Greatest breadth of *vallum* (S. point)	140
Least breadth of *vallum* (N.W. point)	102
Average breadth of *vallum*	120
Length of entrance . . . . . about	115
Breadth of entrance at surface of ground averages about	15
Average diameter of circumvallation, centre to centre of crest	383
Average diameter of internal area, foot to foot of *vallum* .	287
Cubic content of *vallum*, with hollows filled up .	37,530 yards.
Area of inclosure to foot of *vallum* . . .	1a. 1r. 38p.

The vallum.—Hutchinson greatly under-estimated the breadth of the *vallum*, "near 20 paces"—say 50 feet. It consists of stones evidently brought either entirely from the bed of the Eamont, distant 300 yards, or partly from thence, and partly from the Lowther, distant 540 yards.* For the most part they are of very small size,—not much bigger than a man's fist;—though boulders, 18 inches in length, with a very few as much as 30 inches, may, here and there, be seen. Save in scattered patches, the surface of the stone bank, which at first was probably left bare, has become clothed with a thin coating of soil, now grassed over. In this unpromising belt, a number of trees, chiefly ash, have taken root; their umbrage contributing

* The opinion of Mr. Goodchild, of H.M. Geological Survey, as reported by Mr. Atkinson, (see vol. VI, p. 451 of these *Transactions*) is that "Maybrough may very well have been originally one of those great mounds of glacial drift known as Eskers, ... and that the centre has been cleared out, and the larger stones thus obtained placed round the margin, while the gravel and smaller stones were used to form the level internal area. The large stone in the centre is one of the great bluish-grey boulders of volcanic ash, so commonly found scattered over the country by glacial action, and probably brought from the Lake District, and it would, with the others formerly existing here, in all probability be found in the centre of such a mound." That the standing stone was an erratic block, is most likely: but the rest of the theory does not altogether commend itself to our acceptance. It would be singular if this were the only ridge, out of many in the neighborhood, on which such an accumulation of stones gathered: and the theory does not seem consistent with the contours of the surface and the nature of the ground,—evidently, as the sections show, the natural top of the swell, apparently nearly, if not quite, free from stones.

to

to deepen the retirement within. From Hutchinson's account, we learn that the surrounding land, now almost completely cleared, was, in his day, "on every side grown with oaks and ashes,"*—possibly the descendants of the trees of ancient woods, in the depths of which this rude hypæthral chamber was secluded.

The area.—The inclosed area, with an average diameter of 287 ft., may originally have been a little larger; for it is likely that, in course of time, some of the loose materials of the bank, disturbed by growth of trees and other agencies, may have slid downward and encroached upon it. Stukeley calls the diameter 300 ft., and says that, at the time of his visit, (15th Aug. 1725), the land was ploughed up and growing corn. Pennant estimated the diameter at 88 yards; which is a few feet less than the width at the narrowest part: for the field, as the plan shows, is not quite round. Hutchinson describes it as "a fine plain of meadow ground, exactly circular, one hundred paces [250 ft.] diameter."†

The megaliths.—The standing stone is 31 ft. 6 ins., N.W. by W., from the centre of the plot; a distance which lends support to Stukeley's theory of an inner circle; and agrees tolerably with his estimate that "this inner circle was fifty foot in diameter."‡ He proceeds to state his conviction that there "have been two circles of huge stones; our remaining of the inner circle till a year or two ago, [about 1723], that they were blown to pieces with gunpowder: . . . one now stands, ten foot high, seventeen in circumference, of a good shapely kind; another lies along. . . . One stone, at least, of the outer circle remains, by the edge of the corn; and some more lie at the entrance within side, others without, and fragments

* *Exc. to the Lakes*, 92.
† *Ibid.*, 93.
‡ *Itin. Curios.*, II, 44.

all

probable assertion may have so originated. The authors of *Beauties of England and Wales*[*] are yet wider of the mark when they make the last-named writers say that it was Kendal castle which was thus repaired :—an evident misprint.

The berm.—Along the southern third of the circuit of the inclosure there is a faintly marked berm, or terrace, 10 ft. or 12 ft. in breadth, and about six inches in height. It is shown in section C—D, but is too indistinct to be plotted on the plan. Whether artificial or accidental, or whether it was left as a margin in ploughing, cannot now be told. The last supposition seems to be the most probable.

Modern work.—To avoid the risk of future visitors erroneously assuming that certain superficial traces of human handiwork on the *vallum* are ancient, it may be well to note that the footings of fence-walls once crowning portions of its crest,—one of which was continued down the edge on the south-eastern side of the entrance, as indicated on the plan,—are still visible. These walls were removed only a few years ago. The shallow transverse gap through the top of the *vallum*, on the south-west side, was undoubtedly cut in modern times for a cart-track into the inclosure. All the hollows in the stone bank have been made either by the uprooting of trees or by the removal of material for mending the roads. For a long time men were kept here breaking stones; and I was told that hundreds of cart-loads have been taken away for that purpose. The eastern half of the *vallum* seems to have suffered little from this spoliation; and, in its present state, no doubt fairly retains the original height and contour.

Ditch.—The absence of a ditch is easily explained. A ditch usually connotes an earthen bank raised with the excavated material. But here, where the material of the

[*] Westmorland vol. p. 113.

bank

bank was brought from a distance, a ditch was unnecessary. Had the *vallum* been of earth, as at Avebury, no doubt we should here, as there, have had the berm and the inner ditch.

Time required for raising the work.—From an approximate estimate which I have made as to the total time likely to be occupied in raising an embankment such as this, on the supposition that the materials were brought from the rivers in baskets, I find that, if 1000 men were to work industriously and continuously for eight hours a day collecting and carrying the stones, under the most favorable conditions, it would take at least six months. But the time would really be very much longer: for the material could be got only when the waters were comparatively low;—a rarer occurrence in olden times than in our own.

Relics.—No systematic exploration has been attempted here: nor have casual "finds" been of any importance. But two are recorded: the first by Stukeley, who says that "in ploughing at Mayborough they dug up a brass Celt."* In 1879, "Professor Harkness exhibited [to the Society] a portion of a broken unfinished [stone] celt, which had been found by Mr. Williams, at the entrance into the Mayborough. . . . It was obtained on the surface of the soil from which a thin covering of turf had recently been cut."†

Historic notices.—Mayburgh cannot with assurance be connected with any historic event. Bishop Gibson has tried to prove that it was the place called "Eamotum," or "Eamotun," where, according to several chroniclers, Athelstan, in the year 926, two years after his accession to the throne, made a treaty of peace with Constantine, king of Scotland, Howel, king of the western Britons, Owen, king of Gwent, and Aldred, son of Eadulph, of Bamburgh. William of Malmesbury is alone in mentioning a place

* *Itin. Curios.*, II, 44.
† *Trans. Cumbd. and Westm. Ant. Soc.*, IV, 545.

called

called "Dacor" in connexion with a similar treaty which Athelstan made with Constantine and his liege, the king of Cumberland; other parties to the pact, if any, not being named. This also being represented as sequential to that turn in affairs which immediately preceded, and issued in, the afore-mentioned treaty, it is not unreasonable to suppose that these two records refer to one and the same event; and that Dacor and Eamotum were different names of the same place. Dacor is generally identified with Dacre,* in Cumberland, barely four miles W.S.W. from Mayburgh, and only a mile from the banks of the Eamont, or Eamot, as it was formerly called. Probabilities, therefore, do not seem strained if we assume that it was once known by a name formed from that of the neighboring river. Were it not for this (as I think) preferable theory, perhaps the vicinity of Eamont Bridge might have put in a plausible claim by reason of being not far from two—perhaps three—important passages across the river, if it could be shown to have been,—as, doubtless, Eamotum was,—in olden time an inhabited place, with a recognised name. There is, however, so far as I am aware, no evidence that Eamont Bridge, as a settlement, is as old as the time of Pennant, upon whose plan no such village is shown. That Eamotum was Mayburgh,—a spot doubtless uninhabited,—is merely a conjecture, and an improbable one. Ingram, in his edition of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*,† places Eamotum at "Emmet, or Emmotland, in Yorkshire." He evidently refers to two villages called High and Low Emmotland, two miles S.W. of North Frodingham, and 8½ miles N.W. of Hornsea. It may be mentioned that, in the same county, there are two villages or hamlets bearing the names of Dacre and Dacre Banks. They are on the

* In Black's *Guide to the English Lakes*, it is stated that "there is a room in the castle called to this day 'the room of the three kings.'"

† Index to place-names.

river

river Nidd, three miles S.E. of Pateley Bridge;—for topographical reasons, a very unlikely spot to have been the Dacor of the chronicler.

Analogues.—Though standing apart, by reason of its vast size, Avebury has several features in common with Mayburgh. It consisted of an earthen embankment, 4442 ft. in compass, measured along its crest, and 34 ft. in height, within which was a berm about 12 ft. wide, and then a ditch, 33 ft. deep, inclosing an approximately circular area of 28½ acres, having an average diameter of about 1215 feet. Around the edge of this, 100 huge stones were set up in a ring; and, within the circuit, there were also two great stone circles, respectively about 325 ft. and 350 ft. in diameter. One avenue of megaliths (some think two) radiated from the ring, and probably extended to a long distance from it. There are now four gaps through the embankment; but the place has been so much injured, that it is almost impossible to say whether all of these are ancient. The only entrance as to which there seems to be any certainty, is that on the south side, at the head of the Kennet avenue, which points a little south of south-east. '*Bryn Gwyn*, or *Brein Gwyn*, at *Tre'r Dryw*, is a circular hollow of a hundred and eighty feet in diameter, surrounded by an immense agger of earth and stones, evidently brought from some other place, there not being any mark of their being taken from the spot. It has only a single entrance."* "There are no remains of columns in the interior part."† Near by was "a great copped heap of stones," and "the reliques of a circle of stones, with the *Cromlech* in the midst."‡ Gough furnishes the following additional facts§:—That the perpendicular height of the *agger* is 15 feet; that "the people call it *Castelh*,

* Pennant's *Tour in Wales* in 1770, vol. II, pp. 229-230.
† Pennant's *First Tour in Scotland*, p. 257.
‡ Pennant's *Tour in Wales* in 1770, vol. II, pp. 229-230.
§ Camden's *Britannia*, II, 199, Add. to Anglesey.

and

and suppose it to have been anciently surrounded with a town;" that *Bryn Gwyn*, by which Mr. Rowlands designated the work, is properly the name of "a cottage, two bow shots south of it, whose gabel is formed of a monstrous single stone." "Behind the cottage is a broken cromlech. The name of Bryn Gwyn seems to be given also to the circle of stones," eight or nine in number, near at hand: beside which, there are ruins of other megalithic works in the immediate vicinity.

It will be most convenient to discuss the etymology of its name, and the theories about the origin and use of Mayburgh, at the end of this paper, together with those concerning the Round Table.

THE ROUND TABLE.

Site.—The site of the Round Table has been aptly described by Stukeley as "a delicate little plain, of an oblong form, bounded on "one" side by a natural declivity." On the other side flows the Lowther. The ground thus shut in is about 300 yards in length, and has an average breadth of 130 yards. The Round Table is at its northern outlet, where it suddenly expands, continuing on the same level to the banks of the two rivers. In the opposite direction, the surface begins gradually to rise at the distance of 230 yards from the Round Table.

Description.—This earthwork has been formed by digging a ditch nearly around an oval area; with the excavated material forming an inclosing embankment, with a berm between it and the ditch, and raising a slight and nearly circular platform eccentrically in the inclosure. Originally, the continuity of the ditch was broken at two opposite points by leaving gangways to give access to the interior of the work; in line with which were two passages through the embankment. The northern of these two entrances was all but completely destroyed in making the Yanwath road, about the end of last century; only a portion of its inner

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inner end being left visible at the field-gate. A slice was also cut off from the eastern side of the embankment by straightening and widening the Clifton road, which appears to have been done at the same time. The inner area around the platform is nearly level; but the berm rises from the edge of the ditch to the foot of the bank. The section G—H shows what must have been the original form and height of the latter, which, in most other parts, has been much degraded. Especially is this so along the south-western side, where the bank has been scooped out and flattened almost beyond recognition. As to the material of which it is made, Stukeley says,—"the composition of it is intirely coggles and gravel, dug out of the ditch;" adding that "the inhabitants carry it away to mend the highways withal."* Perhaps this may account for the deformation. There is, however, nothing visible to indicate this alleged stony nature of the ground; for the whole is carpeted with fine turf constantly grazed; and not a stone can be seen on the surface. Such is the irregularity of the work on the plan, that it evidently could not have been set out even by pacing,—still less with a measuring line from a centre. I learned from the old man beforementioned that, more than 60 years ago, to the best of his poor recollection, the then owner of the "Crown" inn, one Bushby,—either the same who built it in 1770, or his son,—deepened the ditch, and threw the earth on the banks. I do not, however, imagine that much in this way was done;—probably not enough to alter to any appreciable extent the features of the work.

Detached works.—Toward the northern end of the escarpment on the western side of the field, there are traces of what apparently was an inclined cart-track which, perhaps, once connected the two adjoining fields. Just south of this, two short spur-banks project from the escarpment;

* *Itin. Curios.*, II, 43.

and,

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* *Itin. Curios.*, II, 43.

and,

and, in the plain, midway between this and the Round Table, are faint traces of what may be the remains of another bank.

"*King Arthur's Drinking-cup.*"—In the inn-yard, serving as a water-butt, is a circular tank of red sandstone, 38 ins. in diameter, and about 36 ins. in depth, which has been called "King Arthur's Drinking-cup." About this object, as about many another, a baseless story has been started which, unless checked, may, in time, become, by repetition, a fixed tradition of the spot. I find that even some antiquaries have been misled by confiding too easily in statements made to them, to the effect that this tank was dug up on the site of the Round Table; nay, that it had been found in the very centre thereof. I myself was told this most improbable tale, till, on closely cross-questioning my informant,—the same who had set the story afloat,—he acknowledged that he knew nothing about it; and that he had stated as a fact that which he only supposed to be so. The aforesaid old man—the most ancient authority in the village, having lived there for more than 60 years—testified that it had been in the inn-yard (though not in the same position) as long as he could remember Of course, this tank has really never had any connexion with the earthwork over the way.

Dimensions.—The following is a list of the principal dimensions, &c.—

	Feet.
Original extreme length outside embankment, about	365
Original extreme breadth outside embankment, about	315
Original length, centre to centre of embankment, about	320
Original breadth, centre to centre of embankment, about	280
Longest diameter within the ditch	168
Shortest diameter within the ditch	144
Longest diameter of raised platform	78
Shortest diameter of raised platform	72
Width of crest of bank on line G—H . . .	4
Greatest width of berm	20

Least

Least width of berm	6
Average width of berm	12·7
Width of gangway at narrowest part	9
Width of entrance	21
Greatest top width of ditch	48
Least top width of ditch	41
Average top width of ditch	43·17
Greatest bottom width of ditch	26
Least bottom width of ditch	15
Average bottom width of ditch	19·4
Greatest depth of ditch below inner edge	5·5
Least depth of ditch below inner edge	4·3
Average depth of ditch below inner edge	5·07
Greatest height of bank above original surface, (section G—H)	7
Greatest height of bank above bottom of ditch, (section G—H)	13·4
Greatest height of raised platform	1
Least height of raised platform	0·4
Bearing of S.E. entrance from centre of work	S. 35° E.
Bearing of N.W. entrance from centre of work, about	N. 41° W.

Early notices.—Leland (*c.* 1538) is the first author who has noticed this relic of the past. He says:—"Withyn a Myle of *Perith*, but in *Westmorland*, is a Ruine, as sum suppose, of a Castel withyn a slite Shotte of *Loder* and as much of *Emot* Water, stonding almost as a *mediamnis* betwixt them. The Ruine is of sum caullid the *Round Table*, and of summe *Arture's Castel*. A Myle lower metithe *Loder* and *Emot* at *Burgham* Castel."* After a long interval, comes Stukeley, in 1725. His description is as follows:—"Upon the edge of the Louther, where the bridge now passes it, is a delicate little plain, of an oblong form, bounded on the other side by a natural declivity. . . . . On this plain stands the antiquity commonly called King Arthur's Round Table: . . . . it is a circle inclosed with a ditch, and that with a *vallum*," which "lies sloping inward with a very gradual declivity. . . . The outside

* *Itinerary*, vol. VII, pp. 49, 50.

of

of the *vallum* is pretty steep: it was high originally, as may be seen now in some parts; but it is worn down, as being by the side of the common road. . . . There are two entrances into the *area*, north and south, or nearly so: one end is inclosed into a neighbouring pasture; the *area* had a circle within, somewhat higher in elevation than the other. The outer verge of the *vallum* is a circle of 300 foot."* Pennant's notice (1769) is very short:—"At a small distance beyond the bridge, near the road side, is a circle called Arthur's round table, consisting of a high dike of earth, and a deep foss within, surrounding an area twenty-nine yards in diameter. There are two entrances exactly opposite to each other; which interrupt the ditch in those parts filled to a level with the middle."† These gangways have been left; not filled in. In 1773, Hutchinson writes:—"From thence [Penrith] we went to view a place by the inhabitants called *Arthur's round Table*, near to Emont Bridge, and about half a mile from Penrith. . . . . It is cut in a little plain near the river, of an exact circular figure, save to the eastern and western sides an approach is left to the common level of the plain:—the trench by which it is formed, is near ten paces wide; the soil which has been thrown up on the outward side making a kind of theatre:—the approaches are ten paces wide, and the whole circle within the ditch is one hundred and sixty paces in circumference."‡

Analogues. — Many other ancient earthworks in this country are more or less similar in design to the Round Table; and it may be well to notice in a few words those which bear the closest resemblance to it.

On the occasion of a visit paid by this Society to Eamont Bridge in 1879, attention was drawn to a description of the Round Table by Canon Greenwell and Dr. Rolleston,

* *Itin. Curios.*, II, 43.
† *First Tour in Scotland*, 256.
‡ *Exc. to the Lakes*, 90.

(*British*

(*British Barrows*, 381), after referring to which, they proceed to notice "three similar constructions (one perfect, the others more or less destroyed), almost identical in shape with Arthur's Round Table, [which] still exist at Thornborough, near Tanfield, in the North Riding of Yorkshire;" adding that "two more are to be seen on Hutton Moor near Ripon, not many miles [about four miles S.E.] from those at Thornborough."* Stukeley mentions that Roger Gale, who accompanied him to Westmorland, "says there is such a work as the round table near his house in Yorkshire, [Scruton, about six miles north of Thornborough], with many barrows near it."† Not having seen any of these remains, I take the following particulars of the Thornborough group from the 6-inch ordnance map. It seems that the site is a low plain, of considerable extent, washed on the south-western side by the river Ure. They range in a nearly straight line, almost parallel to the river, and about 3500 ft. therefrom; their distances apart, from centre to centre, being as follow:—from the N.W. ring, (No. 1), to the middle ring, (No. 2), 2480 ft. from No. 2 to the S.E. ring, (No. 3), 2380 ft. In plan, No. 1 is identical with the Round Table; with this addition, that there are remains of an outermost ditch covering the eastern half, with an interval of about 80 ft. between its edge and the foot of the bank. The diameter of the apparently circular central area is 340 ft.; that from crest to crest of embankment, 570 ft. The plan of No. 2 is the same: but here the outermost ditch is indicated as covering only the western quarter. The two diameters of the oval central area scale respectively 340 and 366 ft.; that from crest to crest of embankment, 600 ft. No. 3 seems to differ from the other two in having now no berm between the bank and its very wide ditch,—so wide as to suggest that there may

* *Trans. Cumb. and Westm. Ant. Soc.*, IV, 545.
† *Itin. Curios.*, II, 46.

originally

originally have been a berm, which has been worn away and lost in the counterscarp of the ditch. The diameter of the nearly circular central area is 275 ft.; that from crest to crest of embankment, 550 ft. No traces of an outermost ditch are indicated on the map. The entrances of No. 1 point N. 35° W. and S. 35° E.—the latter exactly toward the northern entrance of No. 3. The bearings of those of No. 2 are N. 33° W. and S. 33° E.—the latter in the direction of the northern entrance of No. 3: that of the northern entrance of No. 3 is N. 35° W.—exactly in the direction of the southern entrance of No. 1: that of the southern, S. 28° E. It is curious, but perhaps hardly significant, that most of these bearings are identical with those of the entrances of the Round Table. There are four *tumuli* within a quarter of a mile of these rings,—one of them being about mid-way, and almost exactly in a line between the entrances of No. 2 and No. 3. Pennant furnishes the following description of these remains, as he saw them in 1773.—"About this common are three of those circular enclosures, which are attributed to the *Danes*, and called *camps*. They lie in a line passing from north-west to south-east, about nine hundred yards distant from each other. . . . . Their form . . . . is an exact circle. The first thing observable is the outmost ring, which consists of a very small ditch: about twenty-four paces from that is a mound, or dike, of earth, of a vast size, not less than twelve or fourteen feet high, covered with sod, and sloping both outwardly and inwardly. At the foot of this a terrass, fourteen paces broad, surrounds a very deep ditch, at least sixteen paces broad at top. This incloses a circular area, smooth and even as could be formed, about a hundred and thirty-two yards in diameter. To this are two entrances, exactly in the middle, and opposite to each other. These are cut through the dyke, and fill the ditch in that part, to the level of the area. One of these circles is very entire: the other has been injured by the

the plough. I mention a third, which I saw in a survey I was lately favored with; for I did not walk far enough to discover it. . . . All these are of the same size: their whole diameter, from outer-ditch to outer-ditch, is two hundred and sixty-four yards. . . . I must observe that the ring near *Penrith*, in *Cumberland*, is an exact miniature of these. . . . I found between two of the circles four *tumuli*, small, round, and exactly in a line with each other: and to the north-west of the middle are, noted in the plan, three others, which escaped my notice."*

Mr. James Fergusson has instanced two earthworks as "identical" in plan and dimensions with the Round Table,—Wood Castle, near Lochmaben, in Dumfriesshire,† and Arbor Low, in Derbyshire.‡ Though, at first sight, perhaps, there is sufficient similarity in both cases to invite comparison, they have by no means that identity of form and character with the earthwork at Eamont Bridge which Mr. Fergusson claims for them.

Wood Castle, on a hill overlooking a valley partly occupied by a chain of lochs, is an earthwork formed by surrounding an elevated circular area, 210 ft. in diameter, with an embankment, outside which is a ditch, and then another lower embankment, with one-third of its circuit covered by a second ditch, and by a third, outermost, and still lower embankment beyond that. The one feature which catches the eye in this connexion is the occurrence of two opposite entrances, like those of the Round Table;—a correspondence much too slight to be of any significance here.§

Of Arbor Low, about nine miles S. by E. from Buxton, Mr. Fergusson says, it "consists of a circular platform, [the

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* *Tour from Alston Moor to Harrowgate and Brimham Crags*, pp. 48, 49, 51.
† *Rude Stone Monuments*, pp. 129, 135.
‡ *Ibid.*, 139, 140.
§ Roy's *Military Antiquities of the Romans in Britain*, 1793, Pl. viii. There is no letterpress description.

plan

plan shows it as a rude oval], 167 feet in diameter, surrounded by a ditch 18 feet broad at bottom, the earth taken from which has been used to form a rampart about 15 feet to 18 feet high, [probably from the bottom of the ditch], and measuring about 820 feet in circumference on the top." No berm intervenes between the ditch and the embankment. "There are two [opposite] entrances across the ditch." These are in a line pointing nearly N. and S. "A tumulus is attached unsymmetrically to the outer vallum," not far from one of the entrances. But Arbor Low had—what none of the other examples, except Avebury, have, or, as far as can be determined, ever had—"a circle of stones on its inner platform, originally probably forty or fifty in number. . . . In the centre of the platform, also, are several very large stones, which evidently formed part of a central dolmen."*

If we except the megaliths, and the lack of symmetry in the approaches, and forget the difference in size, the general design of Avebury, described above, is much like that of the Round Table: the level site, the earthen bank, the berm, the inner ditch, and the circular shape are alike in both: but with these the similarity ceases.

Another example may, perhaps, be brought into comparison; one which, though, like Avebury, differing greatly from it in size, resembles our Westmorland inclosure in several respects. This is "Chlorus' camp," in Wilts, a plan and description of which are given by Sir R. C. Hoare,† and a perspective view, with a brief notice, by Stukeley.‡ It is situated on high ground, commanding a wide prospect. From the former author I glean that in plan it is bluntly pear-shaped, with an embankment inclosing an area of about 15 acres, the central part of which, 550 to 650 ft. across, is nearly insulated by "a

* *Rude Stone Monuments*, 139, 140.
† *Ancient Wiltshire*, I, 217, 218.
‡ *Itin. Curios.*, I, pp. 129, 130.

deep

deep and irregular ditch," with a berm 70 to 100 ft. wide between it and the embankment, which is stated to be 46 ft. in height (probably measured on the slope of the scarp), and with an outer ditch around the whole. "The principal entrance lies towards the east, [E. by S.], where there are some slight traces of an outwork; it had an exit on the opposite side towards the west." The inner ditch was crossed by gangways in line with the outer entrances.

It remains to notice one more illustrative earthwork, and that of more kindred character than any of the above, except the Yorkshire examples,—Piran Round, near Perranzabulo, in Cornwall, of which I am able to give the following particulars and rough dimensions, taken chiefly by pacing, on a hasty visit paid to this spot in 1870. A circular embankment, in good preservation, about 10 ft. high from the surface of the site, and 7 ft. in width at top, surrounds a level grassy area, about 140 ft. in diameter; and the whole is encompassed by an outer ditch, about 25 ft. wide at top, 10 ft. at bottom, and 6 ft. deep, except at two opposite points, S.E. and N.W., where gangways have been left across the ditch, and corresponding entrances, 12 ft. wide, through the embankment. A straight road, 12 ft. wide, and sunk about a foot below the surface, crosses from one entrance to the other, bisecting the area. N. 60° E. from the centre there is a semi-circular recess, 9 ft. wide, in the foot of the inner face of the bank; from which a straight passage, 5 ft. wide, and sunk 12 inches, leads toward the centre into a circular saucer-shaped depression, 13 ft. in diameter at top, 8½ ft. at bottom, and 27 ins. deep, the centre of which is about 24 ft. from the centre of the inclosure. There was another smaller recess, 4 ft. wide, in the bank at a point S. 30° W. from the centre of the inclosure. It may be added here that Piran Round was undoubtedly used for miracle plays; and probably is not many centuries old.

Historic

Historic notices.—But one historic event is recorded as having occurred at the Round Table. Stukeley relates that "upon part of the plain are marks of the tents of the Scots army, that accompanied King Charles II. in his way to Worcester: they encamped here for some time, and drew a small line across part of the southern circle: this was done within memory."*

ETYMOLOGY.—ORIGIN AND USE.

Though the two remains from a forgotten past, which are the subjects of this paper, are herein brought together, it ought not, by any means, to be assumed, as was done by Stukeley, that both belong to one period, and were works of one people. On the contrary, it is possible that a long period may have elapsed between the dates at which they were separately founded; and, in attempting to divine the uses to which they were devoted, it will be best to consider each quite independently of the other. It ought to be borne in mind that works like these,—so notable, the one for the amount of labour expended upon it, the other for its evident adaptation to some established requirement,—are not likely to have been executed for any merely temporary purpose. Their founders must, in the one case, have had in view that which to them was a great and worthy end; and, in the other, some special and continual use to which the special form was suited.

Etymology of the name Mayburgh.—This word, as is common in such cases, has been spelled in a variety of ways;—Maburg, Maburgh, Mayburgh, Maybrough, Mayborough;—and, as is usual too, speculations on its signification have been numerous, and sometimes wild. Bishop Gibson, the earliest writer I can find treating upon the subject, says that the place is "call'd by some King

* *Itin. Curios.*, II, 43.

Arthur's

Arthur's Castle,* and by others *Mayburgh* (or as vulgarly Maybrough) which probably is but a modern name."† Pennant pronounces the name "Saxon, and given long after its construction."‡ Hutchinson quotes from *Magna Britannia* an observation of Dr. Hicks "upon the Saxon and *mago*, *magu*, &c. that it signifies, affinitas, kindred."§ He also says that "the name of Maybrough [at first] induced us to believe, that" . . . it was "a corruption of Maiden Burg," but the standing-stone "confounded this conjecture, and prompted an idea, that the name" was "*Mayberie*, or *Maleberge*."‖ In a note, he adds this quotation from Lord Coke:—"Antiquarians have frequently confounded *Bury*, for *Berie*;—the one implying the tomb of some personage; the latter, *Berie*, being the name of a plain or vale, surrounded with groves and forests, and held sacred by the ancient Britons." West, borrowing from Rowlands' *Mona Antiqua*, p. 84, says:—"If the present name be a Saxon corruption of the ancient name, which probably was *Myfirion*, by the Saxons pronounced Maybirion or Maybir, and to bring it still nearer to their own language, Mayburgh, then this conjecture being admitted, it will signifiy a place of study and contemplation."¶ The authors of *Beauties of England and Wales*** accept the opinion that "its present name is Saxon, and signifies the *Virgin*, or *Maiden's Fortress*." I am tempted to add one more guess to the above, but only by way of suggestion. May the word be of British instead of Saxon origin, without going so far out of the way as Rowlands has done for

* Probably we may thus correct Leland, quoted *ante*, where he says that the Round Table was called "of summe *Arture's Castel*." He appears not to have seen Mayburgh; but, hearing one of its local designations, confounded it with that of the other ring.

† Camden's *Britannia*, 1695 ed., p. 817, Add. to Westm.

‡ *First Tour in Scotland*, 257.

§ *Exc. to the Lakes*, 97.

‖ *Ibid.*, 94.

¶ *Guide to the Lakes*, 7th ed., 167, 168.

** Westmorland vol., 114.

an

an explanation? A plausible etymology might be made by combining the Welsh *ma*, a place or space, with *bwr*, an intrenchment. Little change would be needed, but in the pronunciation of the *a* from the Celtic to the English sound;—such a change as has actually taken place in parallel cases, which could be cited. Another, but much less probable derivation might be that from *magwyr*, an inclosure, a wall. There are two words with so much likeness to Mayburgh, that they deserve to be mentioned here. One of these is *Mawburgh* or *Malbray*, the name of the ruins of a fortified post on the coast of Cumberland. The other is *Avebury*. If we could get over the difficulty presented by the initial M, there is sufficient similarity between some of the various forms of Avebury and Mayburgh to suggest comparison between them: and the force of this (if it has any) is perhaps increased by the analogy between the works themselves. Avebury (now pronounced, and often written, *Abury*) has, at different times, been spelled variously, thus:—*Avreberie* (Domesd.), *Avebury* (Sarum Regist.), *Abery* and *Aubery* (Valor Eccl.), *Avebury* (Monast.), *Aubury* (Aubrey), and *Abury* (Stukeley). It seems probable that the first part of the word is kindred to *ea*, *ey*, *ay*, signifying water. The second part is probably *bury*, (not *bery*), a fort.

For what purpose designed.—When we come to speculate upon the purpose for which Mayburgh was probably founded, we find the subject involved in even more than the usual depth of obscurity; for the page of authentic history is here totally blank; the voice of tradition, if not altogether dumb, is errant and misleading; the form and arrangement of the work are very uncommon, if not unique; and there has been no systematic exploration of the place with the spade. Bishop Gibson, in his Additions to the *Britannia*, calls it, in one place, "a great Fort of Stones," in another, "a Danish Temple." Stukeley, "a great British temple." Pennant, unaware of any tradition,

follows

follows Rowlands in regarding it as "a supreme consistory of Druidical administration." Hutchinson, after mentioning "the traditional account given of this place, . . in nowise to be credited: That it was a Roman theatre, where criminals were exposed to wild beasts; and that those stones were placed for the refuge and respite of the combatant," concludes that it was "a druidical monument," "a temple of the druids." Nicolson & Burn, "a place of worship in the times of the ancient Druids." West says that it "has the circumstances of a British fort; but the rude pillar inclines some to believe it the remains of a druid temple." Gough, "plainly British and Druidical." We may at once brush aside as baseless the fancies in which less known writers were wont to indulge when contemplating Mayburgh as a scene of awful Druidic ceremonies;—such as that the standing-stone supported the wicker colossus in which the holocaust of human victims was offered to the gods.

Now the megaliths in Mayburgh forbid us to regard it as having been a fort: and the supposition, based on tradition, that it was a Roman theatre, is even more untenable. The "Danish" temples, from early times, seem to have been walled and roofed, and were commonly rectangular, with no resemblance to a stone circle. Nor can we now rest satisfied, as our forefathers were, with an undiscriminating application to these cases of the theory which attributed all such works to the Druids. To what, then, must we go for an explanation? In this case, the name affords no clue to the solution of the problem. "Arthur's castle" is, of course, nothing but a fanciful designation, as devoid of authority as is the wholly imaginary mediæval setting of the life of a personage about whom we may truly be said to know nothing. Nor does the name "Mayburgh" help us farther. It evidently embodies the idea of a later time that it was a fortified, or, at least, a fenced place.

If

If we seek the testimony of relics, there are none, save two—the bronze and stone celts already mentioned as having been accidentally turned up in the inclosure. It is rather startling to read in the *Transactions* of this Society (vol. IV, p. 545) when the latter solitary specimen was exhibited, that, upon its sole evidence, the inference was reached that "this circular enclosure perhaps protected a settlement of Neolithic men." If similar articles were never found save in these inclosures, there might be force in the conclusion: but many antiquaries are scarcely aware how widely dispersed such objects are. A friend of mine—a specialist in this line—can hardly cross a field in many localities without picking up something of this kind.

We are then left to question the work itself, its situation, and its surroundings. The argument, handled with great ability by the late Mr. Fergusson, that nearly all such remains are solely sepulchral; and that, of those which are not sepulchral, the greater part are merely memorial; has, perhaps, been rather overstrained by him and by others who adopt his conclusions: and there may be some danger of our yielding too absolutely to the extreme reaction which has long set in against the absurd extravagancies which discredited, if they embellished, the Druid hypothesis. Now Mayburgh is not such a monument as would be likely to be raised in memory of some great victory; nor has anything yet been found which marks it as sepulchral.* What, then, could it have been? We learn that, in olden times, certain religious, legal, and other public and private acts or ceremonies, have not uncommonly been associated with conspicuous stones, either single, or grouped by

* Nothing seems to have been found in the *vallum* while the extensive burrowings therein for road stone were in progress. So far, the evidence against a sepulchral use may be regarded as positive: but it is negative in the case of the area, which, as I have already noted, has never been excavated. Until this shall have been done, the testimony of the spade must be regarded as very incomplete.

nature

nature or by man. Among these, stone-rings have held a prominent position. Upon a review of the whole subject —dimly lighted as it is—I am hardly able to avoid the conclusion that in Mayburgh we have that which suggests that its founders had some such purpose in view. It appears to me to rank with remains, such as Bryn Gwyn, which stand apart, bearing the marks of a *locus consecratus*. By what people established, we know too little to venture to guess; whether it be the work of the Northmen who over-ran and settled in these parts; or of those whom they dispossessed; or of some yet earlier race of whom we have a still more shadowy conception. Is it possible that the ash trees which flourish on the spot have a more than accidental connexion with it? And again, is it possible that the spring which wells forth between it and the high-road may have been one of the ruling incidents which determined the selection of the site?*

The Round Table: *What was its use*?—We are now on much firmer ground; and the limits within which we may wander are much narrower and better defined: so that, for once, the conclusions of those who have written on the subject are in close accord. Leland (admiring believer in Arthur though he was) has not ventured to speculate on this spot, glorified, as it has been, by association with the name of that hero of chivalry. He contents himself with simply recording that the earthwork is "a Ruine, as sum suppose, of a Castel." Bishop Gibson says, "'Tis possible enough that it might be a *Justing-place;*" adding,—"That it was never design'd for a place of strength, appears from the trench being on the in-side."† Stukeley writes:—"At first sight we may see that it was intended for sports, but not on horseback, because much too little." After giving

* It is hardly necessary to remind the reader of the sacred character which the ash bore in Scandinavia. In Iceland, *dom-rings* and springs are nearly always found associated.—*Viking Age*, I, 371.

† Camden's *Britannia*, ed. 1695, p. 817.

particulars

particulars of the southern ring-embankment, he remarks that "these two circles and the interval make 1000 foot in length; and there is just room enough without them, next the river and next the bank, for a *circus* or foot-race, according to the old manner of the Grecian, which were always celebrated by the sides of rivers; . . . and probably British chariots had here their courses." "After the religious duties [at Mayburgh] were over, they went down to the *circus* to celebrate their games: and I could not but admire the fine genius of these people in chusing places for their sports; for upon the verge of the acclivity, along the *circus*, an infinite number of people might stand to see the whole without the least inconvenience, besides those in the plain between the two circles; and these two circles admirably well executed the intent of the *meta's*, but much better than those in the Roman *circus's*." He adds:—"This is used to this day for a country rendezvous, either for sports or military exercises, shooting with bows, &c."* Pennant says:—"Some suppose this to have been designed for tilting matches, and that the champions entered at each opening. Perhaps that might have been the purpose of it; for the size forbids one to suppose it to be an encampment."† Four years later, however, on seeing the similar but larger rings at Thornborough, which, from their size, and in other respects, were much better suited to such exercises, he had seen reason somewhat to modify his opinion. He then says:—"The intent of these rings is cleared up by *Saxo Grammaticus*. [Lib. iii., p. 48, and Notes, p. 97]. Among the northern nations duels were fought within circles: if the combat was sudden, the spectators themselves formed the ring, as is customary with mobs from the days of Ajax to the present time. If

* *Itin. Curios.*, II, 43, 44. There is a perspective view of the Round Table and the southern ring, in both of which men are wrestling, while horse and foot races are in progress outside.

† *First Tour in Scotland*, 256.

the

the combatants were men of rank, and the cause important, then the ring was inclosed with pales, or with stones, or earth. This placed was called, in the old *Danish, Holmur;* a single combat, *Holm-ganga;* to enter into the ring *at gange a holm;* and the laws of duel *Holmganga leg.* The terraces were allotted for the numerous spectators, who sat round this arctic *amphitheatre;* the entrances placed opposite to each other, for the champions to enter at, to divide the field; and on the signal given by the heralds, to rush on each other, to make their *congressus.*" "I daresay the ring near Penrith, in Cumberland, was formed for the same purpose."* Hutchinson says:—"We were induced to believe this was an antient tilting ground, where justings had been held: the approaches seemed to answer for the career, and the circle appears sufficient for the champions to shew their dexterity in the use of the lance and horsemanship; the whole circus being capable of receiving a thousand spectators on the outer side of the ditch."† West held that the Round Table "may be presumed to have been a place of public exhibition for martial exercises."‡ Nicolson & Burn, that "it seems to have been a justing-place;" adding the rather amusing and superfluous supposition,—"and perhaps the knights, after justing and exercise, might dine here."§ "Mr. Albert Way, who visited Arthur's Round Table, described it as a Roman castrensian theatre in connection with the camp at Brougham."‖ Dr. Simpson "held that the table was indeed for a hoam-gang of the Norsemen, and was probably constructed a considerable

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* *Tour from Alston Moor to Harrowgate and Brimham Crags*, 49, 50, 51.

† *Etc. to the Lakes*, 90. Stukeley estimated that the annular space between the ditch and the top of the *vallum* "would hold at least 10,000 people." This is too large an estimate, as Hutchinson's is much too small. The real number who could stand closely packed in the space (leaving unoccupied a width of 50 ft. at each gangway) is 5,000.

‡ *Guide to the Lakes*, 7th ed., 167.

§ *Hist. and Ant. of Westm. and Cumb.*, I, 414.

‖ *Trans. Cumb. and Westm. Ant. Soc.*, IV, 545.

time

time before the Norman conquest, as a place on which duels were fought."*

Now it is easy to decide what the Round Table was not. Clearly it was not a camp. To Mr. Way's theory, it may be objected, (1) that it is a mile from Brougham, where a good site could easily have been secured; (2) that it does not resemble most other castrensian theatres with which we are acquainted; (3) that its form is identical with that of the group at Thornborough, which, I believe, are not near any Roman military station. The occurrence of the raised platform in the midst of the inclosure, as well as the narrowness of the limits, forbid us to suppose, with Gibson, Pennant, (first impression), Hutchinson, and Nicolson & Burn, that it was a tilting-ground. Nor do its interior arrangements seem such as to make it suitable for a "thing." We are thus left to accept either or both of the two remaining alternatives: for no more rational supposition has been, or is likely to be offered. The particular view ultimately taken will turn very much upon questions of date. It is said that many wrestling matches have been held within memory on this spot. Stukeley speaks of "sports and military exercises" as being practised there in his own day. Among these, boxing is likely to have held a prominent place: and if we can but go back far enough, what more likely than that we should find this a scene of the bloodier encounters of the *holm-ganga?* Now it is recorded that duelling was abolished in Norway (may we suppose also in our own country?) while Knut was on the throne of England.† Whether the Round Table was in existence before that time, who shall say? Judging from its state of preservation, my own impression is that it is not nearly so ancient. As to its age, there are but two sources from whence we can expect to get any light.

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* *Ibid.*
† *Viking Age*, I, 576.

One

One would be the opening of the *tumuli* at Thornborough and at Scruton. Should these yield evidence of their probable connexion with the neighboring rings, the problem would be sufficiently solved; and we should have to carry these earthworks back into the earlier centuries of our era; and, perhaps, might safely attribute them to a Scandinavian origin. The other possible (though, I fear, now very improbable) source of information would be the discovery of the Roman road (if there was one) from Yanwath to Brougham. If it should be found to have taken (as most likely would be the case) the line of the present road,—having afterward become grassed over and lost;—then, it would follow that the Round Table, the northern end of which was destroyed in making the modern road, is *post*-Roman.

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